



The Citizen Soldier Support Program

The Citizen Soldier Support Program (CSSP) www.citizensoldiersupport.org is a congressionally authorized, formerly DoD funded program administered through the Odum Institute for Research and Social Science at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill. CSSP is a capacity-building initiative designed to strengthen community support for Service Members and their Families focusing on increasing geographic and financial access to deployment and post-deployment related behavioral health services, especially for those in rural, frontier and underserved areas.

Analysis - Mapping and Deployment Demographic Data

CSSP programs are guided by use of an integrated systems approach. Leveraging its home at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the CSSP team uses analytical tools ranging from GIS mapping to statistical analysis to map the deployment demographic information of Service Members (AD, RC and recent AD Separations) down to the community level. CSSP researchers provide answers on pertinent policy questions about adequacy and access to services from DoD, the VA, or other service delivery systems and allows CSSP to help its partners target training and other interventions to the needs of the community. www.unc.edu/cssp/datacenter

Training – Civilian Health and Behavioral Health Professionals in Every Community

This is not a DoD or VA problem but a Community Health Problem to solve. To prepare civilian providers to address post deployment issues facing OIF/OEF/OND veterans and their families, CSSP has partnered with Area Health Education Centers and medical providers from the Department of Veterans Affairs, United States Navy and United States Public Health Service to create onsite and online courses at www.aheconnect.com/citizensoldier/. Over 4000 providers have received these day long trainings and roughly 16,000 providers have enrolled in our online training including providers from all 50 States and over 1000 US Counties.

PTSD and TBI - “Treating the Invisible Wounds of War” continues to be offered as onsite training nationally; the online course was combined, updated and re-launched in June 2011. It is also available in Spanish.

Women Returning from Combat Provider Training - “Issues of Women Returning from Combat” helping civilian providers understand the health/mental health concerns of women veterans within the context of military culture, gender-specific roles, available support resources and effective treatments.

CSSP Family Training - “Issues Effecting Families During Military Deployments”. The trainings were conducted in each of the other 9 NC AHEC regions in 2010-2011 and is now available as an online course.

Primary Care – “Treating the Invisible Wounds of War: A Primary Care Approach”, focuses on education/training and practice improvement for family physicians, with an explicit backup and referral plan to help address the unmet need for mental health assessment and care among returning Servicemembers

Optometrists and Dentists - “Recognizing the Signs of Mild Traumatic Brain Injury During Routine Eye Examinations”, focuses on head traumas common to the military population and is designed to give Optometrists the tools to recognize the clinical signs that can identify veterans at risk for untreated head trauma.

“Employee Assistance Professionals and Military-to-Workplace Transitions” developed under a grant from Bristol-Myers Squibb to train Employee Assistance Professionals to better respond to the needs of veteran employees.

PTSD/TBI Tool Kits – CSSP, in partnership with NC AHEC and VA developed trainings Tool Kits on PTSD and TBI.

Training Toolkit – “Connecting the Faith Community and Behavioral Health Professionals to Help Service Members and Their Families” adapted from materials developed by CSSP and the Faith community

Access – Connecting Service Members and their Families to Behavioral Health Professionals in their Community

CSSP works with public and private organizations to increase access to trained behavioral health providers. One of CSSP’s most powerful tools in this mission is the www.warwithin.org database which enables veterans and family members to find local civilian health providers who understand the challenges of deployment-related issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, depression, substance use disorder and suicide. To address the concern that a reservist might have a lapse in care during the deployment cycle as they switch from civilian to military health insurance, www.warwithin.org allows users to search for providers who accept patients with different types of insurance, or no insurance at all. CSSP now has registered providers in all 50 states.

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